

**DOCUMENTATION FORM**  
For Extraordinary Bird Sightings in Iowa

What species? Red-necked Grebe How many? one

Location? Zirbel Slough, Clear Lake, Iowa, Southeast part of southern pond

Type of Habitat? Slough/marshland with adjoining pond

When? date(s): May 7, 1991 time: 4:55 p.m. to 5:12 p.m.

Who? your name and address: Kim L. Pinneke, P.O. Box 1092, Mason City, Iowa 50401

Others with you: none

Others before or after you: None

*Describe the bird(s) including only what you observed. Include size, shape, details of all parts (bill, eye, head, neck, back, wing, tail, throat, breast, belly, undertail, legs, feet). Also mention voice and behavior.*

Species was about the size of a Mallard with a long neck and a broad breast region. The long neck was reddish brown in color and color extended to the breast. Back was grayish. Face had a prominent white patch and crown was black with a sort of knob on the back of the head. This "knob" was also black in color. Details on the bill were not specifically noted by this observer although it did appear to be long and slender. The specimen was about a foot off shore and was in the water the entire time of viewing. This provided several lateral and back views. The specimen made no call or song that I was aware of. Behaviorally the specimen dabbled about in the water with its bill, preened, swam about and finally went to sleep, not at all being disturbed by my presence. When swimming, the neck was usually extended, but it did lower the neck and head from time to time and when it slept.

*Similar species; how eliminated:*

Horned Grebe eliminated by size, lack of white face patch in breeding plumage.  
Eared Grebe eliminated by size, lack of white face patch in breeding plumage, overall color.  
Pied-billed Grebe eliminated by overall color, size, lack of "bump" on back of head and lack of face pattern.

Western Grebe eliminated by lack of reddish-brown neck and breast color.

Canada Goose eliminated by neck coloration and lack of "bump" on back of head.

Mallard, Canvasback, Pintail, Oldsquaw, Redhead, Bufflehead and Ruddy Duck all eliminated by overall appearance and lack of conformity to the major details of the species in question.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about the identification? no

If yes, explain:

*Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), optical equipment.*

Distance at viewing was estimated at 35 feet. I faced due south to view the bird. Sky was partly cloudy with the sun in the southwest. 7x50 binoculars used for viewing.

*Previous experience with species and similar ones:*

Previous experience with Pied-billed and Horned Grebes as well as familiarity with the several duck that were eliminated as described above.

*References and persons consulted before writing description:*

Peterson's A Field Guide to the Birds: East of the Rockies

How long before field notes made? in field this form completed? 24 hours

Send completed form to Field Reports or CBC editor (address on back cover of Iowa Bird Life).